

## CHAPTER XXIII

### FORMATION OF NEW JEWISH CENTRES

#### (1) HEGEMONY IN JEWRY

UP to the nineteenth century there was only one great Jewish centre, that in Eastern Europe, comprising millions of Jews, and exercising a decisive influence on Jewish movements and history. In the nineteenth century a new centre arose in Germany, numerically much inferior to the East European, but superior to it in political and economic influence. Also French Jewry, though unimportant in size, assumed a leading position; by founding the "Alliance Israelite Universelle" in 1860, they created the first Jewish world-organization in the Diaspora, and, by providing schools, took charge of the education of the Oriental Jews. Under German intellectual influence, the German Jews developed Judaistic studies, reformed the Jewish religious service, and, jointly with the French and English Jews, became the champions of Jewish political emancipation in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

The predominance of the German Jews in Jewish affairs remained unchallenged till the end of the nineteenth century; American Jewry, composed mainly of immigrants

from Germany, willingly accepted the intellectual leadership of the German Jews, till, as a result of the enormous influx of East European Jews, its composition underwent a complete change. While in the fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century American Jewish congregations sought rabbis with a knowledge of German, and many Jewish newspapers appeared both in English and German, in 1875 the first American Institute for the training of rabbis and